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**Inventory for
Manuscript Collection
MS - 28**

Houghton Family Papers

**1813-1984
Bulk: 1847-1917**

by
Elisabeth Meier
August 2018

4 boxes and 2 oversize boxes
3.5 linear feet

*Accessions no. 65.831-3, 71.56.1, 72.288, 73.182, 97.95.5, 98.121.16, 99.106.2, 2000.28,
2000.34, 2001.16.1, 2006.8, and 2018.19.1-3*

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Abstract

Houghton Family

Houghton Brothers (1858-1915)

Papers, 1813-1984

Bulk: 1847-1917

4 boxes plus 2 oversize boxes

Shipbuilders, ship owners, and merchants in Bath, Maine

Accounts, deeds, logbooks, and employment records for the Houghton Brothers firm and the Houghton family of Bath. Business papers sporadically cover most aspects of the Houghton Brothers' affairs, including their shipyard, salt business, wharf, and vessels managed by the firm. Family papers include personal finances, estate papers, and personal material for members of the Houghton Brothers firm and immediate family. Log-books for the Houghtons' steam yacht, *Juno*, and naptha launch, *Clover*, are also here. Finally, there are files of genealogical research for the Houghton and Trott families compiled by later generations.

Gifts of Amory M. Houghton III, John Reed Houghton, Elisabeth Houghton Trott, and Houghton M. Trott.

MS-028. Accession #65.831-3, 71.56.1, 72.288, 73.182, 97.95.5, 98.121.16, 99.106.2, 2000.28, 2000.34.4, 2001.106, 2006.81, and 2018.19.1-3.

Finding aid (folder level control) in repository.

Added entries—persons:

Houghton, Amory McLellan (1859-1926)

Houghton, Henry L. (1826-1904)

Houghton, John Reed (1824-1913)

Houghton, Levi (1783-1857)

Houghton, Levi W. (1815-1895)

Houghton, Silas Amory (1821-1881)

Kimball, Clarissa A. Houghton (1819-1859)

Meeker, Charlotte Reed Houghton (1829-1863)

Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels):

Clover (launch)

Juno (screw steamer, yacht)

Northampton (ship)

Persia (ship)

Scotia (ship)

Virginia (ship)

Added entries—key terms:

Account books

Accounts, household

Administration of estates

Cotton trade

Houghton shipyard

Labor

Logbooks

Shipbuilding – Employees
Shipowners
Shipwrecks
Shipyards – Maine – Bath
Wages
Yachts

Acquisition

This collection was given to Maine Maritime Museum by Amory M. Houghton III, Elisabeth Houghton Trott, and Houghton M. Trott, all descendants of John R. Houghton. It arrived in small groups over several decades. John R. Houghton (III) also donated many artifacts to the museum collection.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on this collection.

Physical Condition

The papers are mostly in good condition. Some of the larger documents have battered edges. Newspaper clippings have begun to degrade. The bindings on the logbooks are worn and cracking and many of the cover boards are loose. Some are completely detached.

Related Materials

There are many related materials in other collections. Logbooks for the Houghton ships *Hanover*, *Parthia*, and *Louisiana* are respectively in SM 53/7, 49/5, and 67/12. Logs from other Houghton vessels may also be in Small Manuscripts or other manuscript collections; researchers would do well to search by the vessel's name. There are also diaries kept by Captain Charles E. Patten aboard the ship *Harry Morse* (managed by the Houghtons) in SM 123/9, Captain Charles Henry Reed aboard the ship *Servia* in SM 48/3, and by Nathan Bucknam aboard the ship *Milan* in SM 48/4. An inventory of Captain Ephraim Delano's possessions taken when he died in 1861 aboard the ship *Houghton* is in SM 8/40.

MS-4 contains several decades of correspondence between the Houghton Brothers and Edward Carter, one of their long-term captains. More documents related to the Houghton Brothers firm can be found in SM 58/11, which contains a co-partnership notice from 1896, and SM 61/7, which has a list of all Houghton vessels. Additionally, Amory M. Houghton's yacht master's license is in SM 7/2 and Sydney J. Meeker's will is in SM 7/9.

PC-49 contains an extensive collection of family photographs and scrapbooks from the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries. It includes scenes of Bath, the Kennebec waterfront, the Houghton shipyard, and images of the family's yacht *Juno*. The scrapbooks contain a mix of photographs, clippings, and primary documents depicting family, household, and business affairs.

The library holds several secondary sources about the Houghton family. Amory Houghton III has compiled an exhaustive family history. In addition, notes relating to the ship

Hanover are in SM 23/14 and SM 90/9. A typescript of a history of the Houghton ice pond is in SM 25/24.

The Houghton family has also donated half-hull models, ship portraits, family portraits, parts of the yacht *Juno*, wallpaper samples, a chronometer, and many other artifacts related to the Houghton fleet.

Historical Note

The Houghtons were a prominent family of shipbuilders and merchants in Bath, Maine, who owned and managed a substantial fleet of their own vessels. The family arrived in Bath in 1802, when Levi Houghton (1783-1857) emigrated from Lancaster, MA, and opened a retail store. He soon joined the town's maritime economy, providing wholesale groceries to ships in port and purchasing shares of local vessels. After the War of 1812, Levi Houghton founded a shipyard at the foot of South Street, launching his first vessel, the brig *Bolton*, in 1819.

In the mid nineteenth century, Levi Houghton's four surviving sons, Levi W. (1815-1895), Silas A. (1821-1881), John R. (1824-1914), and Henry L. (1826-1904), all joined the family business, then named Levi Houghton & Sons. The firm was formally renamed Houghton Brothers in 1858 after Levi's death. A third generation, represented by cousins Amory M. Houghton and Sydney J. Meeker, became partners in 1896.

As the century progressed, shipbuilding and management became the central part of the Houghton business. The shipyard produced 44 vessels over seventy years, most of them large, full-rigged ships. Like several other Bath shipyards, the Houghtons owned and managed the vessels they produced, and purchased several others to expand their fleet. The firm specialized in the transatlantic cotton trade and expanded, in the late nineteenth century, into the California grain trade. They also used their vessels to import salt from Europe, which they sold to other Bath shipyards, and to export ice from their West Bath ice pond.

The Houghtons launched their last ship, the *Parthia*, in 1890. They sold their remaining vessels shortly thereafter, but maintained their salt business, warehouses, and wharf until the beginning of World War I. During that period, they leased the shipyard to a number of other builders, including Gardiner Deering, E.S. Crosby, and Thomas Hagan. The yard was eventually sold to Bath Iron Works.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains accounts, logbooks, scattered correspondence, and estate papers from the Houghton Brothers firm and the Houghton family. Unfortunately, as a fire in the Houghton Brothers' office destroyed many of the company's papers in 1898, the surviving documents are fragmentary.

Series I contains documents from the Houghton Brothers firm. A wastebook and a few pages of a daybook represent the firm's general business, including shipbuilding, vessel operations, the salt business, lumber transactions, and charges for wharfage at the Houghton dock. There are also some scattered accounts, letters, and receipts for investments. Shipyard operations are represented by an employee time book and a payroll book, which provide a detailed picture of the Houghtons' employment practices and a work schedule for ships built or repaired after 1880. The collection also contains a 1905 lease for the shipyard as well as a deed for the sale of part of the property in 1917.

Only a few vessels from the Houghton fleet appear in the collection. Three of these, the *Northampton* (ship), *Scotia* (ship), and *Virginia* (ship), are represented by logbooks; one, the *Persia*, by a detailed statement of her wreck; and the remainder by partial accounts with Baring Brothers of London.

Series II contains personal papers from the Houghton family. Because business and personal affairs frequently overlapped, many of the documents in this series also contain information on the Houghton Bros. business. Levi Houghton, his children Levi W., Clarissa A., Silas A., John R., Henry L., and Charlotte R., and his grandson Amory are all significantly represented. Their papers include accounts for personal business dealings, including shares of non-Houghton vessels, property deeds, estate papers, and accounts between the individual and the family firm. In addition, John R. Houghton's papers contain detailed household accounts for the 1860s, and Amory's contain a journal of an extensive trip through Europe to see the Vienna World's Fair in 1873.

This series also contains records of estates handled by the Houghton family or the Houghton Bros. firm. Three of these estates were for captains that sailed Houghton vessels, and principally concern the captains' business affairs with the firm.

Log-books for the family steam yacht, *Juno*, are also in Series II. These contain fairly detailed records of excursions from 1882 to 1917, including the routes taken and guests aboard. Some of the volumes include entries for disbursements and maintenance. There is also a single log-book, containing similar information, for family's naptha launch, *Clover*.

Series III contains clippings and genealogical material compiled by the Houghton family in the twentieth century. Series IV contains material, much of it genealogical, from the Trott family, related to the Houghtons by the marriage of Amory M. Houghton's daughter, Elisabeth, to Raymond Trott.

Box and Folder List

Series I: Houghton Brothers Company Papers

Box	Folder	
1	1	Business correspondence, Houghton family, 1857-1862
	2	Telegrams, Houghton Brothers, 1896-1899
	3	Daybook (pages 361-366), May – July 1882
	4	Wastebook, May 1880 – December 1926
	5	Receipts and accounts, 1873-1888 and undated
	6	Investments, 1859-1878
	7	Employee time book, Houghton Bros. shipyard, July 1880 – October 1901
	(OS)	Payroll book, 1877-1922 (removed to oversize box)
	8	Shipyard lease to E.S. Crosby, 1905, and sale to Bath Iron Works, 1917
	9	Lists of Houghton vessels and captains
	10	Vessel accounts, <i>Houghton</i> (ship), <i>Pocahontas</i> (ship), <i>Potomac</i> (ship), and <i>Shamrock</i> (ship)
	(OS)	<i>Northampton</i> (ship), log-book, April 1882 – May 1883 (removed to oversize box)
	11	<i>Persia</i> (ship), “Statement of General & Special Charges” from the loss of the vessel, November 1870 – August 1872
2	1	<i>Scotia</i> (ship), log-book June 1880 – March 1882
	(OS)	<i>Virginia</i> (ship), log-book, October 1883 – January 1884 (removed to oversize box)

Series II: Family Papers

Box	Folder	
		Levi Houghton (1783-1857)
2	2	Timber contract with George F. Patten and John Patten, 1847
	3	Bank book, 1854-1858
	4	Promissory notes and receipts, 1848-1854
	5	Deeds, 1813-1854
	6	Estate papers, 1858-1863
		Charlotte (Reed) Houghton (1793-1876)
	7	Accounts with Houghton Bros. and estate, 1859-1877 and undated
		Levi Warren Houghton (1815-1895)
	8	Business correspondence and accounts, 1888-1896
	9	Insurance, <i>Evie Reed</i> (bark), 1880-1881, with Silas A. Houghton
	10	Deeds, 1863-1891
	11	Estate papers, 1895-1896
		Clarissa A. (Houghton) Kimball (1819-1859) and Otis Kimball (1808-1870)
	12	Estate papers, 1860-1888
	13	Estate payments to Margaret R. (Kimball) Reed, 1864-1874
		Silas Amory Houghton (1821-1881)
	14	Receipts and deed, 1854-1865
	15	Estate papers, 1883-1896
		John Reed Houghton (1824-1913)
	16	Correspondence, 1836, 1848
	17	Accounts with Levi Houghton and Houghton Bros., 1845-1891

18		Investments, 1854-1878
19		<i>J.W. Marr</i> (ship), ownership, 1875
20		<i>John Watt</i> (ship), insurance, 1865-1872
21		Household accounts, 1858-1859
22		1860
23		1861
24		1862
25		1863
26		1864
27		1865
28		1866-1868
29		1873-1879
1	1	Notebook, 1873-1889
	2	Deeds, 1860-1886
		Emma Patten (McLellan) Houghton (1835-1866)
	3	Deeds, 1864
	4	Estate papers, 1865-1875
		Henry Ludovicus Houghton (1824-1904)
	5	Deeds, 1877-1885
	6	Estate papers, 1891-1905
		Charlotte Reed (Houghton) Meeker (1829-1863)
	7	Estate accounts, 1863-1888
	8	Estate correspondence, 1864-1877
		Amory McLellan Houghton (1859-1926)
	9	Correspondence, 1873
	10	Accounts, 1875-1901
	11	Journal of a trip to Europe for the World Fair in Vienna, 1873; accounts, 1879
	12	Notebook, 1884-1891
	13	Deeds, 1875-1888
	14	Sydney J. Meeker, will, 1927
	15	<i>Clover</i> (naptha launch), log-book, 1900-1908
		<i>Juno</i> (screw steamer, yacht), log-books, kept by Amory McLellan Houghton
	16	Two log-books, 1882-1915 and 1883-1889
	17	Two log-books, 1887-1895 and 1895-1899
4	1	Two log-books, 1899-1912 and 1904-1908
	2	Two log-books, 1908-1913 and 1913-1917
	3	Inclusions from above log-book, 1913-1917
	4	Houghton family, pews and cemetery lots, 1847-1858
		Estates managed by the Houghton family
	5	Samuel B. Doane, Captain, 1866-1875
	6	Elijah D. Manson, Captain, 1856-1872
	7	Jacob P. Morse, 1839-1888
	8	William Reed, Captain, 1821-1874
	9	Miscellaneous receipts, 1860s

- | | |
|----|--|
| 10 | Miscellaneous deeds, Albert B. Hall, Joseph Hall, William D. Healy, James McLellan, John Richardson, and Gilbert Trufant |
| 11 | Ephemera |
| 12 | Prospectus of Wood End Green Estate, Hayes, Middlesex, England |

Series III: Research and Genealogy

Box	Folder	
4	13	Clippings, Houghton Bros. and shipbuilding history, 1907 and undated
	14	Scrapbook, newspaper clippings, shipbuilding history and obituaries, 1918 - circa 1927
	15	Notes on Houghton and McLellan genealogy
	16	Notes on Houghton genealogy, compiled by Amory M. Houghton (III)
	17	Correspondence on genealogy, Elisabeth Houghton Trott, 1981-1984

Series IV: Trott Family

4	18	Family papers, 1859-1946
	19	Genealogy and research papers
	20	Clippings and ephemera

Oversize Material

Box	Folder	
5	1	Houghton Brothers Payroll Book, 1877-1922
6	1	<i>Northampton</i> (ship), log-book, April 1882 – May 1883
	2	<i>Virginia</i> (ship), log-book, October 1883 – January 1884
	3	Transcription, <i>Virginia</i> (ship), log-book, October 1883 – January 1884

Appendix A: Houghton Family Genealogy

Levi Houghton (1783-1857)

Married Charlotte Reed (1793-1876)

Children:

Levi Warren Houghton (1815-1895)

Married Arizilla Blenthram Record (1824-1865)

Children: Henry W. Houghton (1845-1910)

James McKeen Houghton (1846-1907)

Sarah Virginia Houghton (1848-1935)

Clara Elizabeth Houghton (1850-1887)

Frank Parkman Houghton (1852-1901)

Ernestine Arizilla Houghton (1852-1947)

Charlotte Elisabeth Houghton (1816-1822)

Clarissa Ann Houghton (1819-1859)

Married Otis Kimball (1808-1870)

Children: Margaret R. Kimball (1844-1904)

Married Morris Adelbert Reed (1838-1927)

Levi Houghton Kimball (1845-1846)

Clara Houghton Kimball (1846-1867)

Fred Warren Kimball (1849- ?)

Levi Houghton Kimball (1853- ?)

Silas Amory Houghton (1821-1881)

Married Lucy Anne Sewall (1828-1902)

Children: Silas Amory Houghton (1846-1846)

Charlotte Ann Houghton (1847-1907)

Married James A. McLellan

John Amory Houghton (1850-1851)

Kate A. Houghton (1853-1909)

Emma McLellan Houghton (1856-1936)

Marcia Houghton (1860-1924)

Married Samuel S. Sewall (1860-1924)

John R. Houghton (1824-1913)

Married Emma Patten McLellan (1835-1866)

Children: Amory McLellan Houghton (1859-1926)

Married Jane McIlwain (1863-1945)

Children: Elisabeth M. Houghton (1894-1988)

Married Raymond Trott

John Reed Houghton (1896-1932)

Amory McLellan Houghton Jr. (1900-1957)

Henry Ludovicus Houghton (1826-1904)

William Frederick Houghton (1828-1828)

Charlotte Reed Houghton (1829-1863)

Married Cornelius Meeker (1816-1904)

Children: Charlotte Isabel Meeker (1851-1942)

Cornelia Amory Meeker (1852-1890)

John Randolph Meeker (1854-1925)

Gilchrist Irving Meeker (1856-1857)

Florence Meeker (1858-1858)

Clara Louise Meeker (1859-1870)

Albert Sydney Johnson Meeker (Sydney) (1862-1928)